REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending. Claim 19 has been newly added. No new matter is presented.

Claims 1-18 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka (U.S. Patent No. 4,658,299). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a plurality of function blocks connectable to each other. The Examiner asserts that elements 1, 2 , 3, 42 and 7 correspond to the claimed function blocks. However, these function blocks are not connectable to each other through a network. Referring to Fig. 2 of Tanaka, the digital copier 42 and the printer 7 are connected to a switching device 9 and to the I/O interface 37 through the switching unit 9. The control unit 1 interfaces with the switching unit 9 through the I/O interface 37. The switching unit 9 primarily switches between possibly output units 3, 6 or 7 (see the arrow pointing down on lines 12, 16 and 10, which indicate the directional flow of the signals). Therefore, the switching unit will direct the output to either the high-speed printer 3, the soft display 6 or the printer 7. This provides the control unit with several possible means of outputting information without providing for separate signal lines to each output device (see col. 1, lines 51-56). Thus, as is apparent from Fig. 2 of Tanaka, the function blocks 2, 3, 6, and 7 are not connectable to each other.

Claim 1 also recites a bus changer which changes bus connections among said plurality of function blocks and said interface. The Examiner appears to consider that the switching unit 9 corresponds to the claimed bus changer which changes bus connections among said plurality of function blocks. Applicants respectfully submit that this is not true. As stated above, the switching unit 9 merely selects the destination of the image signals but it does not change bus connections among the plurality of function blocks and the interface.

Further, as seen in Fig. 1 of the application, the function blocks are actually connected to a network, whereas in Tanaka, the function blocks together with the remainder of the system shown in Fig. 2 may be connected to other devices on a network through the communication interface 36. These arrangements are clearly distinct. In light of the foregoing, the features of

claim 1 are not taught or suggested by Tanaka.

Claim 9 recites the same features discuss above in connection with claim 1. Claim 9 further recites a controller which discriminates data received from the network and controls data transmission to one of the function blocks to be operated.

The Examiner asserts that element 32 corresponds to the claimed controller. However, element 32 is a CPU and there is no disclosure which teaches or suggests that this CPU 32 receives any data from the network and then controls the data transmission to one of the function blocks to be operated. In fact, the disclosure specifically pointed to by the Examiner (col. 4, lines 61 to col. 5, lines 6) does not relate at all to the network connection or any data received from the network. Thus, the features of claim 9 are not taught or suggested by Tanaka.

Claim 16 recites an image processor which includes a plurality of function blocks where a process of deciding whether a received request to perform a function is executable in the image processor is performed. If it is determined that the function is not executable in the image processor, the bus connection is changed to operate an external apparatus connected through an interface connectable to said network.

First, Tanaka only discloses the image processor and does not disclose an external apparatus connected through a network and an interface. Tanaka merely decides which one of several types of output devices will perform the needed function. There is nothing in the disclosure of Tanaka which suggests that if the function blocks (3, 6 and 7 for example) cannot perform the requested function, an external apparatus will be requested to "fill in", so to speak.

The Examiner specifically refers to col. 5, lines 3-6 and asserts that this discloses deciding whether the function is executable in said image processor. Actually, col. 5, lines 3-6 states "[T]he control relating to the above-mentioned transmission of image signals is performed by the CPU 32 according to the commands entered by the operator through keyboard 31." This portion of Tanaka does not provide support for the Examiner's assertions. There is simply no decision making process taking place beyond where image signals are sent. Tanaka does not

make any determination of whether the output devices can perform the requested function and the Examiner has failed to specifically point out where such a disclosure can be found in Tanaka. Accordingly, the features of claim 16 are not taught or suggested by Tanaka.

The remaining claims are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Newly added claim 19 is allowable for the reasons set forth above.

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing 325772008700.

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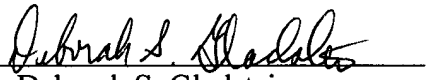
Respectfully submitted,

By: 

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